

ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
INSTITUTIONS REGISTRATION
DEPARTMENT

FOR THE
YEAR 1898



BOSTON
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COMPLIMENTS OF

E. C. Marshall,

Acting Institutions Registrar,

BOSTON,
MASSACHUSETTS.



OFFICE OF THE REGISTRAR,
28 COURT SQUARE, February 1, 1899.

HON. JOSIAH QUINCY,

Mayor of Boston :

SIR, — In accordance with chap. 3, sect. 22, of the Revised Ordinances, the Acting Institutions Registrar respectfully presents the report of the Institutions Registration Department for the year ending January 31, 1899.

The department has been conducted along the lines laid down in the act creating it and has investigated all questions relating to the settlement of paupers and the commitment of the insane, and has made collection of a mass of statistics relating to the dependent and deficient classes of the community, which should prove of great value to any student of sociological problems and to the city. It has been its aim to procure the fullest information regarding the individuals of these different groups and its accumulations of material will, when properly analyzed, undoubtedly add to our stock of knowledge much of interest and of value in regard to the causes and treatment of what might be termed the diseases of the social state: Crime, Pauperism and Insanity. It must be allowed that in a healthy and model social state the first two of these evils would not exist and that the third would be very much reduced in number, and therefore it is the earnest wish of all social reformers to endeavor to ascertain the causes of these evils in order that they may be eradicated, or, if that is not possible, that their evil results may be nullified as far as it may be accomplished. It may be found, and it will probably be so ascertained, that these causes lie farther back than it is possible for us to attempt to reach, that the seeds of these diseases were planted centuries ago and that it is the fruit of them from which society

is suffering. If this is so then our treatment of these subjects can only be in line of mitigation of the results, for these evil influences are being even now reimplanted in new beings to continue to keep alive the same unfavorable conditions with which we are now affected. But whatever the causes which produce them, and whenever they began their evil work, the study of their results is a duty enjoined upon us, for it is only by such study that we may form an opinion as to whether they may be repressed or checked, and in this labor, hard and unattractive as it may be, no one who is interested in humanity can be indifferent, and those who love mankind and desire its uplifting cannot be otherwise than enthusiastically interested. All over the land vast buildings stand as monuments of what we are doing for our dependent classes, and Boston is not behind in this beneficent and philanthropic work. Our city has invested in such structures the vast sum of \$5,066,300, and its annual charges for maintenance of these institutions amount to \$1,386,427. Besides all this there is expended for the outdoor poor of our city the sum of \$132,000. These moneys, if spent wisely, are not regretted by the citizens of Boston; but if unnecessarily spent, if the causes which produce this vast aggregate of expense are removable, then its expenditure is unwise, injudicious, and cruel. Cruel because above and beyond this money spent is vast human suffering, for no one can measure the anguish of mind, the bitter struggle with poverty which presages pauperism, until they closely observe the individual instances, and see for themselves the hopeless and wearing struggle before the individual gives way and sinks into the abhorred and dreaded abyss of pauperism. Unwise and injudicious it is also, for in these institutions there are many who seek evil courses that they may be supported by the State. Lost to shame of the name of criminal and to the servitude of confinement, they deliberately violate the law in order that they may be committed to a place of refuge from care, and be well provided for; and others apply for admission to the pauper institutions even when able to maintain themselves by labor.

This then is the condition which confronts us, and to which we must address our study: Can this condition of things be changed; can we put into effect remedial measures that will operate to change these vast and hidden causes that produce within the body politic Criminals, Paupers and Insane? It may be that it is unnecessary to separate these classes and to study them apart, for it is undeniable that the larger part of the inmates of our correctional institutions are near to pauperism, and will certainly enter into it if their lives are prolonged, and that of the insane many are caused to be in that state through poverty or fear of it. So if we are forced to the conclusion that it is poverty that causes these dependent classes to exist in our community and in the world, then our problem is to determine its causes and seek a remedy for them, if it is possible to find one.

It seems to me that this is the logical answer to our question: When we can remove poverty from the world then this condition will be removed; when we can find the causes that produce it, then we will have no problem to confront us.

It appears as though the question must be looked at in this way, for time out of mind philanthropists — and by this term I mean the genuine laborers in the vineyard of poverty — have endeavored, by painstaking, self-sacrificing, earnest work, to uplift members of the class from which come the paupers and the criminals, and although their efforts have in many cases been rewarded by success, and they should be given the meed of praise for bringing back into self-respect and manhood individuals of the class or even, in some cases, families, yet their efforts have been, so far as their effect upon the whole question of poverty, much like the efforts of Mrs. Partington in sweeping back the rising sea. Could the whole progeny of “The Jukes” have been regenerated and their nature entirely changed, it would have had but insignificant influence upon the mass of crime and poverty-ridden people of the world nor done anything to relieve the “Prisoners of Poverty” of Helen Campbell, from the crushing load they have been and are obliged to bear under our present industrial system.

I would not be understood as depreciating the efforts of those, whose unselfish thought, whose earnest care, whose untiring efforts have lifted even one person out of the slough of despond, and made life brighter and happier for him. I have the highest respect for them, and the results which they achieve; for if “whoever could make two ears of corn or two blades of grass to grow upon a spot of ground where only

one grew before" deserves well of mankind and does essential service to his country, how much more they who make useful citizens and worthy men and women of those who were sunk in degradation and despair; but what I maintain is that their efforts are not calculated to remove the great underlying causes of these diseases of society any more than the kindly efforts of a devoted nurse, who tenderly cares for a plague-ridden patient, affects the continuance of the disease in the world.

Then if the question is the large one of how shall we eliminate poverty from our midst, how raise every citizen from squalor and wretchedness to comfort and happiness, it seems almost a hopeless one to answer. Commander Booth, in "Darkest England," says, "It may be that nothing will be permanently put right until everything has been turned upside down," and declines to discuss the question of how to do that, and asks what shall be done for individuals, saying: "Here at our Shelters last night were a thousand hungry workless people. I want to know what to do with them. Here is John Jones, a stout, stalwart laborer in rags, who has not had one square meal for a month, who has been hunting for work that will enable him to keep body and soul together, and hunting in vain. There he is in his hungry raggedness asking for work that he may live and not die of sheer starvation in the midst of the wealthiest city in the world. What is to be done with John Jones?" There are many John Jones' in this city and in our country, who are vainly seeking for work that they may live, and of whom we might ask the same positive question. It is pitiable the way he presents the situation. "Some time," he says, "perhaps we may venture to hope that every honest worker on England soil will always be as warmly clad, as healthily housed, and as regularly fed, as our criminal convicts; but that is not yet," and merely asks that the honest worker be raised to the standard of the Lord Cab Horse; viz., that he shall have a shelter for the night, food for his stomach, and work allotted to him by which he can earn that food. And this in civilized England, with its "Mrs. Jellybys" and contributions to the heathen of "Borrioboola Gha," and kindred objects, while humanity is trying to exist in its capital in worse condition than that of convicts or cab-horses.

If we look at the condition of our poor we will find it very much the same. If we go through our Suburra and our slums and view closely the life of our submerged tenth, we see that their lives in many cases are not as comfortable as that of an ordinary herdic horse. It appears to me that

while no effort should be relaxed to benefit individual cases in this mass, yet that no real improvement can take place in the condition of the poor until we agree upon a standard to which it is desirable we should attain, and then, by earnest effort, to endeavor to reach it.

The lowest standard that we should attempt to reach is that every man who wishes work and is earnestly seeking it should be provided with it, and I think it is the duty of society to see that none of our citizens should be placed in our almshouses as long as they are able to earn their own living, but that we should direct our study to the question whether the money that is spent for the support of our institutions could not more wisely and economically be spent in plans that would enable us to provide for "John Jones" and his fellows, the work, for lack of which he and those dependent upon him are suffering. Such a scheme and such a plan is not socialistic except so far as its operations may bring about a better social state, nor is it paternalism only so far as it is one of the duties of the State to see that its citizens are best cared for in its expenditure of the public funds.

Most of those who have studied the problem have arrived at the conclusion that the remedy consists of returning in some manner to the farm districts of the country those idle in the cities, and certainly, when we observe the depopulation of the country and the enormous crowding of the cities it would appear that this plan, if it could be carried out, would be of benefit not only to the individuals thus transferred, but also to both city and country districts; but the many experiments which have not been crowned with success that have been made in this direction, leads one to suppose that the difficulties in the way of success are insuperable, for it would seem as though they had been well thought out, and were controlled by those having earnestness and enthusiasm for the work.

The question of poor relief is not an old one. The first laws of England for providing relief for the poor were passed in 1536, and the study of the subject has been principally devoted to the question of how best to provide for the poor, and not to endeavor to find a way to prevent poverty. Society has taken upon itself the study of how to care for the product without devoting much study to the question of how it came to have it upon its hands. I do not consider it possible that every one can be made wealthy, and that a condition can be made in the world by which all the people can be placed upon an equality, or that there will not be in the community the relatively poor and relatively rich classes,

but I earnestly believe that in a well-regulated social state a condition of things should not exist that prevents a man, willing and able to work, from securing remunerative labor, and that allows the aged citizen, who has been a support to the nation in his strength, to end his days as a pauper. Joubert says that "Men are born unequal. The great benefit of society is to diminish this inequality as much as is possible by procuring for all, security, property, education, and assistance." I would add to this thought that one of the greatest benefits society can confer upon its members is to procure WORK for them, and that one so ineffectively organized that it does not perform this duty is failing in its obligation to its members, and is sowing within itself seeds of menace to its life.

It appears to me that what should be studied with earnestness is the question, By what system can a city provide work for willing and able hands? This question if answered, and I think it is capable of answer, would go far towards solving the question propounded, and do much towards relieving all classes of our institutions and doing away with our relief of outdoor poor. It would certainly seem not to be a difficult matter to be arranged, although its practical working might develop great perplexities and embarrassment. But of these our plans are not free now and we should not expect that a perfect system should be evolved and put in operation in an immediate time, but steps should be made in this direction, in the hope that in due time the condition of the classes from which proceed these baneful results may be changed. Then if this result can be achieved it may be found possible, without an upheaval of the whole social state, to bring about a better general condition of the whole organization of Society; for this object, if attained, would separate the worthy deserving citizen, who falls a prey to discouragement and environment, from the lazy, indolent and vicious class, and enable us to care more wisely and economically for the interests of both. This plan, coupled with a system of Old Age Pensions, would render unnecessary the continuance of our almshouses and relieve us of the social disease of Pauperism.

Regarding Old Age Pensions, a writer in the "International Journal of Ethics" says, "The State has created old-age distress, therefore the State is bound to relieve it." Without going into the question as to the responsibility of the creation of the distress of old age, it seems to me that the State recognizes its duty to relieve it in the expenditure of the public moneys for its relief at present, and the question only

to be determined is whether the money, as now spent, is expended more wisely than by a system of Old Age Pensions. If the worthy poor could be separated from the unworthy, and the money expended for our institutions devoted to the support of the worthy poor of the community, I believe that no more money would be required than is spent at present to give the aged worthy poor a decent comfortable living in their own homes, and if more money were required, I am of the opinion that a tax on the amusements of the people might be made that would not be felt, or, if felt, would be paid willingly and even gladly, for it would be a source of pleasure to the community to feel that in taking their enjoyment they were assisting in the support of the aged people of their community that had passed beyond the working age. A tax of ten cents on every ticket sold for one dollar, or two and five-tenths cents for every one sold for twenty-five cents, for admission to places of amusement of every nature in this city, would, I am of the opinion, result in a sum amply sufficient to provide a system of Old Age Pensions for the worthy poor, and would be ungrudgingly paid by the people, for I think they would agree with the principle that the pleasures of the people should assist in the relief of the miseries and pains of the community.

The detail work of the office has been carried on on approved sociological lines, and the city has been divided into twelve districts in order to localize poverty and crime in the city. The divisions of the city into districts are shown on the map appended to this report. I believe a thorough and complete knowledge of where our disease centres are will be of benefit to us in the treatment of its product.

The card system of registration is showing good results, and while it does not in every way fulfil all the requirements of a perfect registration, I am convinced that as the initial registration it is the best that can be devised. It undoubtedly requires supplemental aids in order to make it entirely and completely perfect. It was not expected when the system was devised that it would be complete, but that it would require to be supplemented and added to in order that the best results might be attained.

There is required for the office an improved cabinet for the reception of the cards, and I am engaged in thought as to the best methods of keeping and arranging them.

I have had the walls of the office made into blackboards on which are shown, by means of lines, the weekly movement of population in the institutions and, as temperature is shown to have some influence in regard to poverty and crime, I have

had the weekly mean temperature indicated upon the Penal and Pauper Department boards. On the chart indicating the movement of the population in the Boston Insane Hospital, I have thought it best, as temperature is considered to have but remote, if any, influences upon that disease, to compare the line of population with a line showing the fluctuations in business, and for that purpose I have taken the weekly average of failures in the country, as no other comparison could be suggested by the alienists.

The diagrams showing the comparative age periods of those admitted to the almshouse on Long Island have been prepared, under the direction of Professor Sedgwick, and have been placed upon the boards of the office, and both charts and diagrams may be found in the appendix to this report.

The most important and delicate work of the office is the determination of settlements. It is important because a careless and slipshod system would result in a largely increased expense to our community by there being charged to this municipality the support of many people who should be supported by others or by the State. This department stands as a safeguard against this unjust imposition. The change in the laws of settlement, invalidating all those acquired previous to 1860, made necessary a review of all the histories of inmates of our eleemosynary institutions, numbering 2,338 cases. This resulted in the invalidating of the settlement of ninety-one inmates and placed the burden of their support upon the State, making a gross saving to the city of \$15,271.22 yearly.

The number of persons examined as possible insane cases during the year was 952. Of this number 206 were sent to the Observation Hospital at Deer Island until the question of their mental status could be determined. While for many cases the hospital at Deer Island is the best place for their treatment, and the percentage of cases of recovery from delirium tremens is very high, and the complete change of scene, surroundings and air, and relief from the noise of the city, are favorable to the "clearing up" of other cases of suspected brain disturbance, yet in some cases it is very desirable that there should be in the city a place of detention for persons whose mental condition is doubtful, and who should receive medical care until their friends are ascertained and their mentality determined. It is desirable that some such place should be established for many reasons, one of which is the stigma which is likely to attach to the unfortunate person who may thus acquire a reputation of having been an inmate of what is popularly known as a penal insti-

tution, and although the number of innocent cases treated there is not large, yet in the few cases of this kind there is distress occasioned that would be obviated by the establishment of such a place of detention as I have indicated. At my suggestion, Dr. Jelly, the senior examiner of this department, and Dr. Prescott, the Medical Director of the Penal Institutions Department, have considered the matter and have reported a plan, the general features of which meet with my approval. Their letter is herewith submitted:

BOSTON, MASS., February 1, 1899.

HON. E. C. MARSHALL,

Acting Institutions Registrar, Boston :

DEAR SIR, — In reference to the matter of a detention hospital for the insane in the city, I would say that after talking it over with Dr. Jelly, we would recommend the following:

That a detention hospital be built near or adjoining to the Court House, which would furnish accommodations for ten patients, one patient being assigned in each room. There should be a small diet kitchen to provide the delicacies for the sick, and such light diets as many of the patients may need. The ordinary meals should be procured from the outside. The staff should consist of a matron and a male head nurse, two female nurses and one male nurse. There should be two padded cells, bedding accommodations on each floor, and sleeping accommodations for the help. We would recommend that there be two floors with five cells on each floor. The minor details of the building could be decided upon at a later time.

Yours very truly,

WILLIAM H. PRESCOTT,

Medical Director.

I would respectfully recommend that an appropriation be made for the establishment of such a detention hospital as is recommended. I desire to be understood, however, as not in any way suggesting this as a substitute for the Observation Hospital at Deer Island, but as an entirely distinct establishment to care for cases that it is improper to send to a hospital so intimately connected with a penal institution as that is, for I cannot but feel that for many cases that institution is an ideal place for treatment of persons temporarily mentally out of balance.

WORK OF DEPARTMENT FOR YEAR ENDING JANUARY 31, 1899.

Number of applications	4,774
Outside investigations	1,260
Applications withdrawn	439
“ refused	202
Medical examinations	952
Children's examinations	607

PAUPER ADMISSIONS.

State Almshouse	2,125
Boston Almshouse and Hospital, Long Island	1,012
Charlestown Almshouse	44
Marcella-street Home	26

INSANE ADMISSIONS.

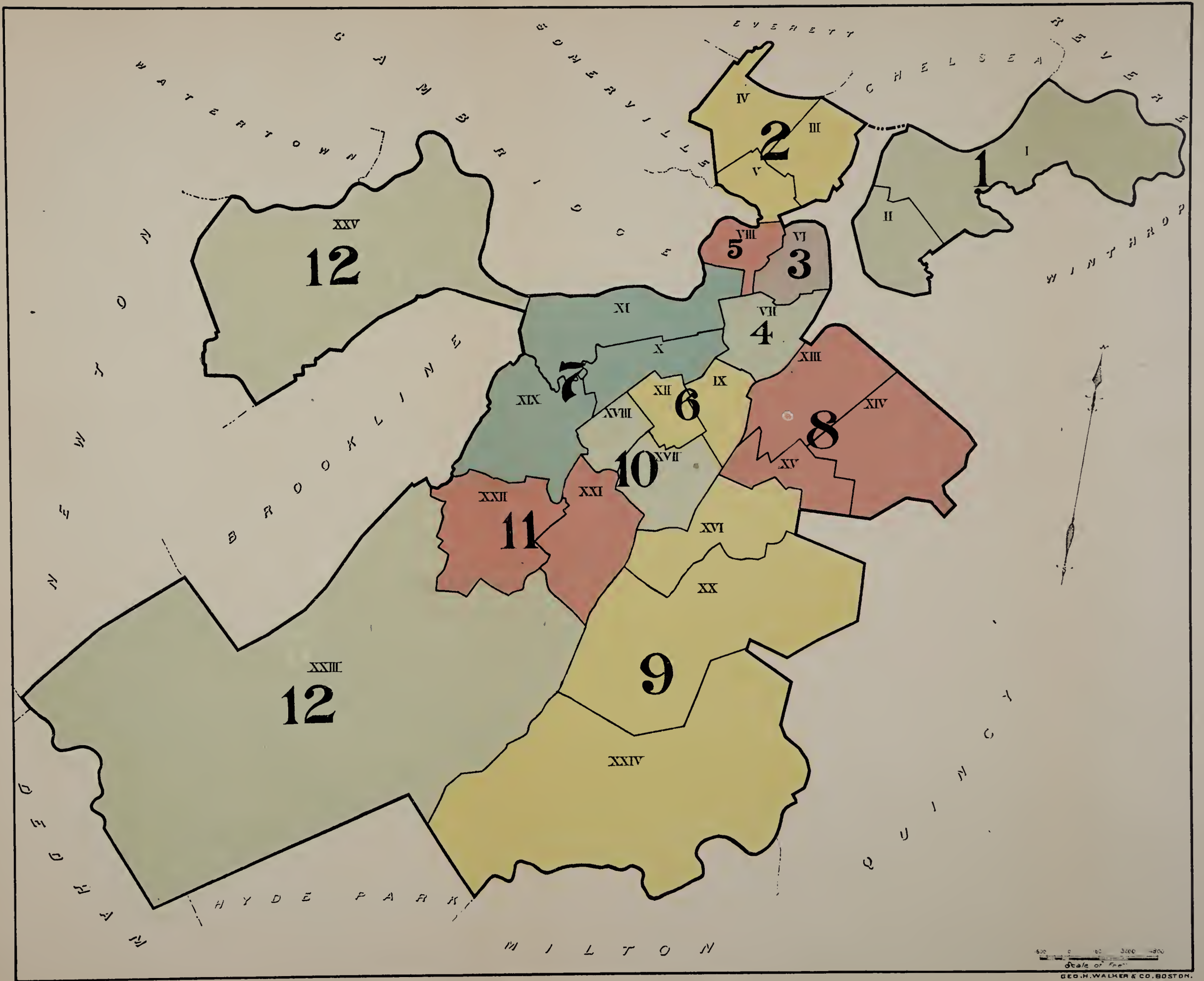
Observation Hospital, Deer Island	206
Boston Insane Hospital	253
Danvers Insane Hospital	67
Taunton Insane Hospital	61
Worcester Insane Hospital	61
Westborough Insane Hospital	115
Bridgewater Insane Asylum	9
Dipsomaniac Hospital	145
Northampton Insane Hospital	1
Hospital for Epileptics	9

Total number of Admissions	4,134
Total number of Settlements Investigated	5,655

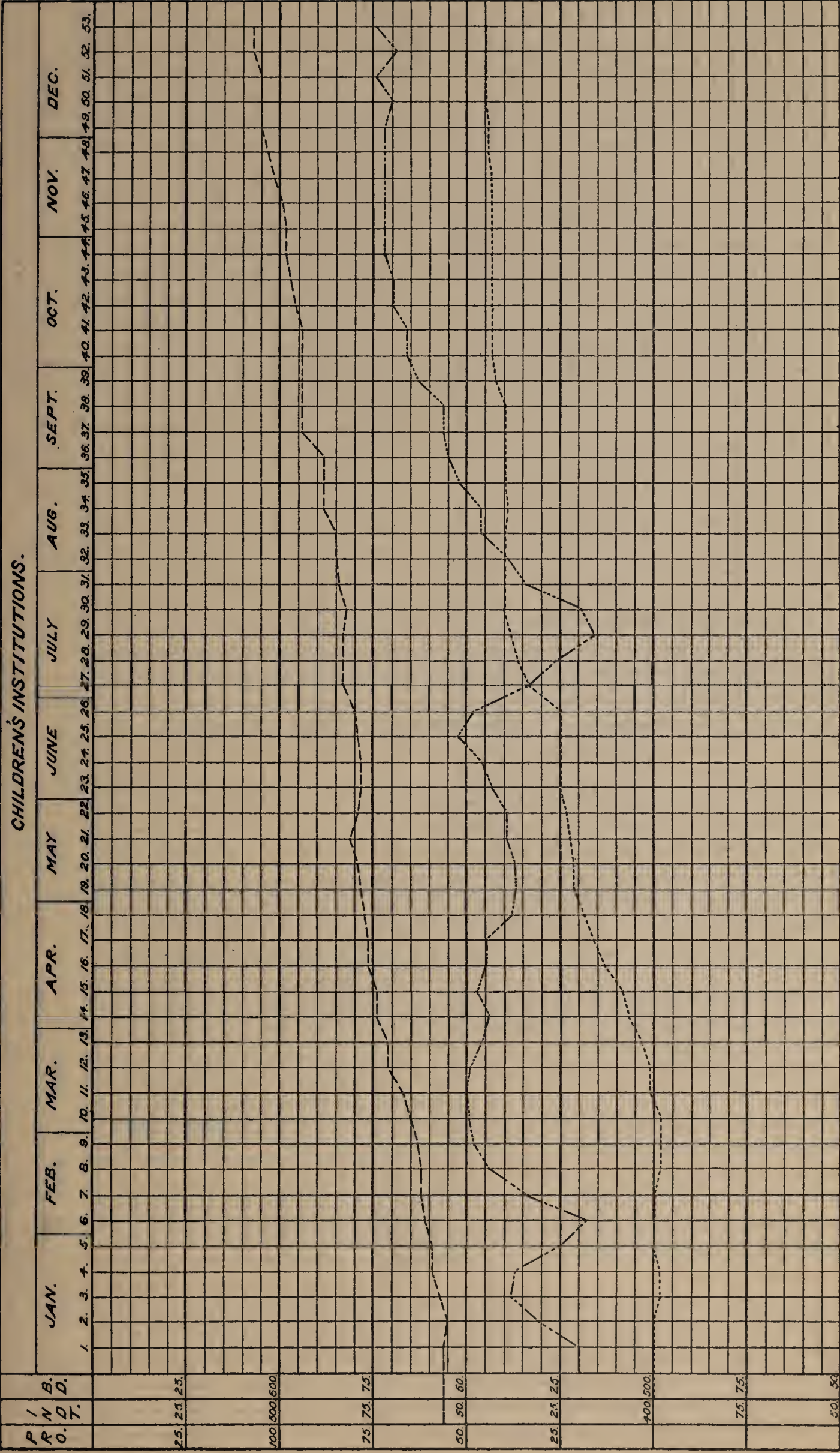
EXPENDITURES FOR YEAR ENDING JANUARY 31, 1899.

Salaries and wages	\$9,902 56
Medical services	3,101 04
Keeping of horses and carriages	1,391 63
Transportation	917 41
Printing	347 97
Stationery	280 82
Food	129 76
Repairs	118 38
Postage	92 00
Medical and surgical supplies	6 00
Total	<u>\$16,287 57</u>

E. C. MARSHALL,
Acting Registrar.

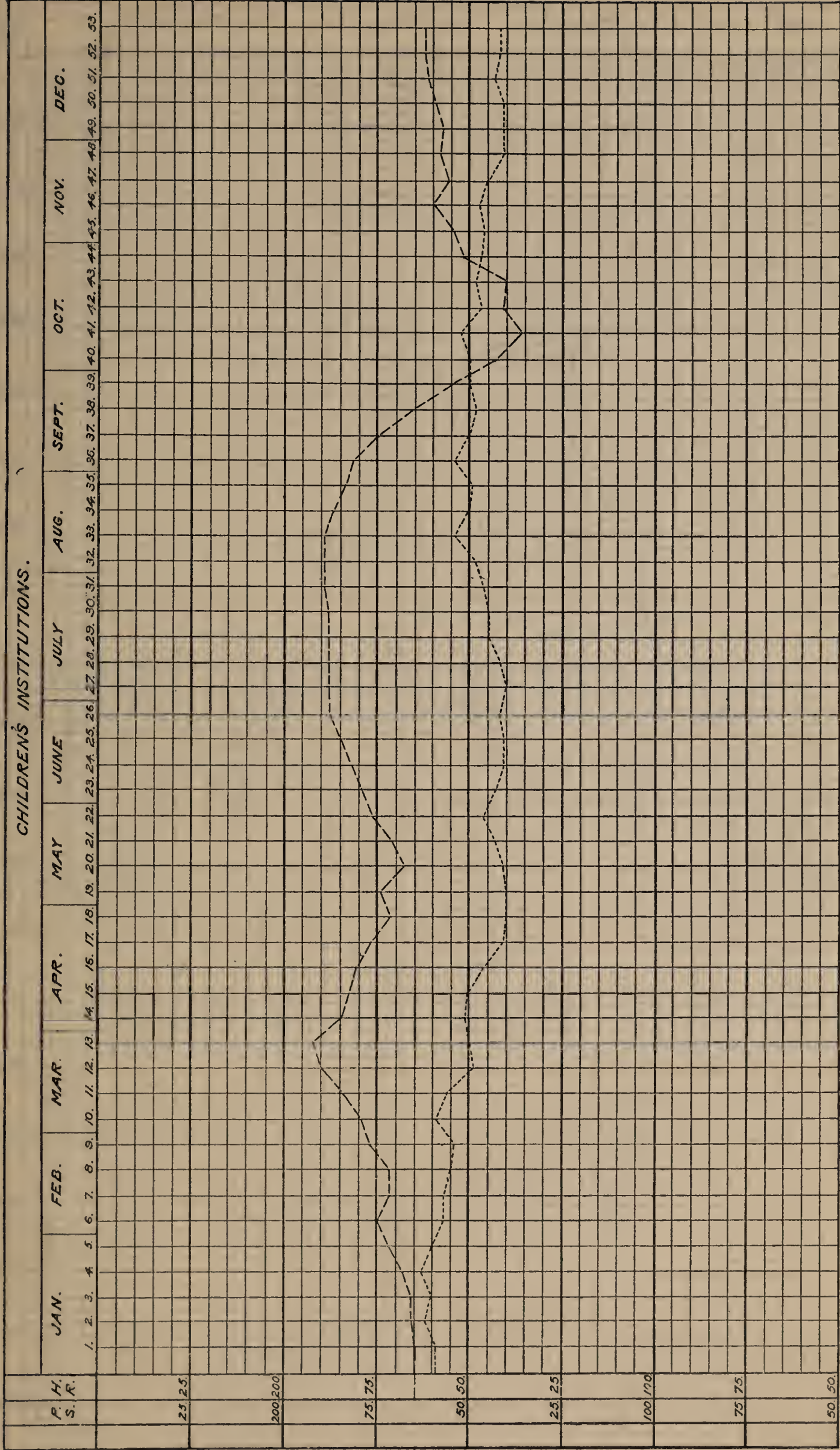


CHILDREN'S INSTITUTIONS.

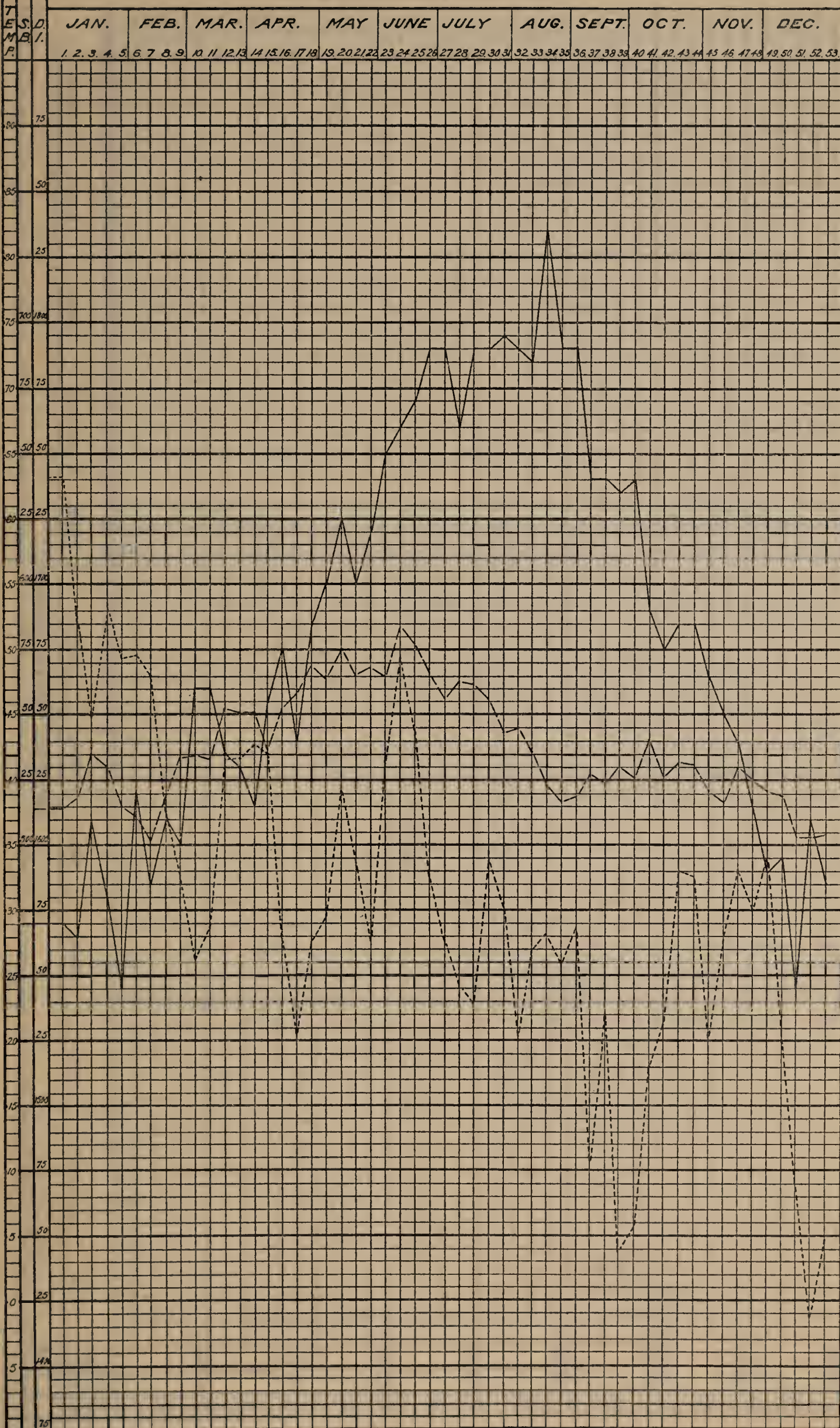


Children on probation indicated thus : ----- indented, thus : ----- boarded, thus : -----

CHILDREN'S INSTITUTIONS.

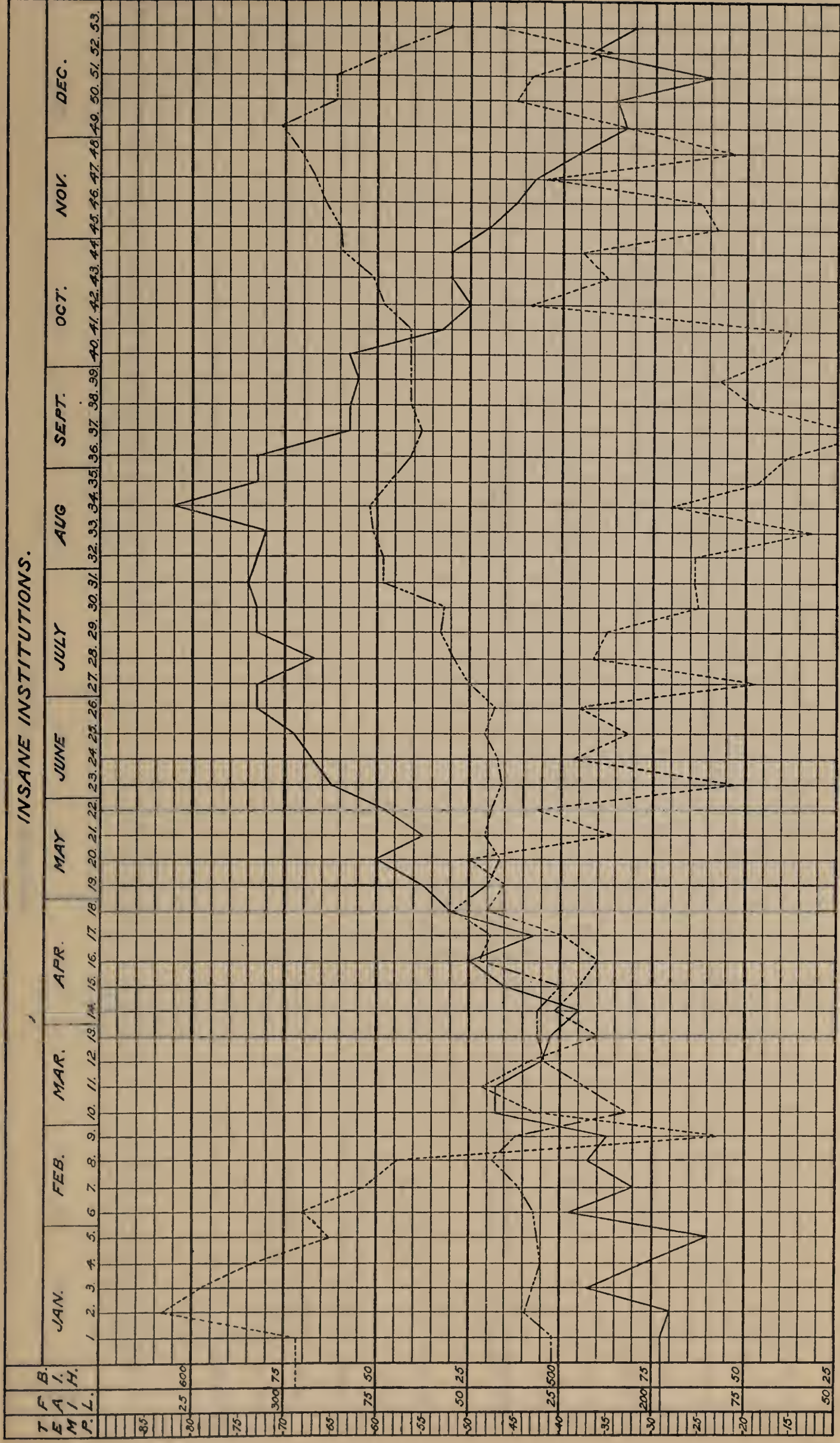


PENAL INSTITUTIONS.



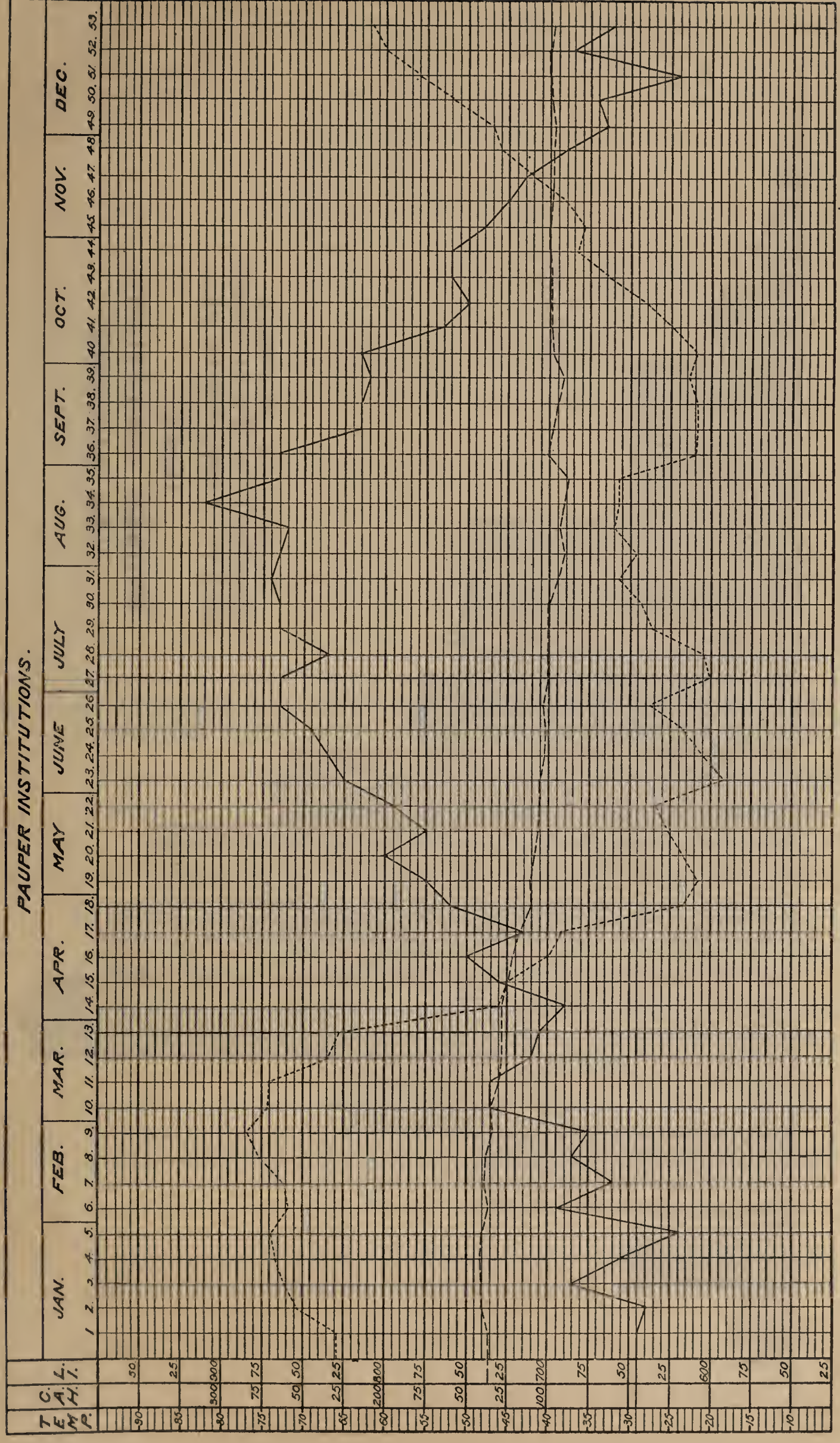
Temperature indicated thus: ————, Inmates at So Boston, thus: - - - - -; at Deer Island, thus: - - - - -

INSANE INSTITUTIONS.



Temperature indicated thus: ———. Number of Failures, thus: - - - - - . Number in Boston Insane Hospital, thus: - - - - - .

PAUPER INSTITUTIONS.



Temperature indicated thus: ----- . Number of Paupers in Charlestown Almshouse, thus: ----- ; at Long Island thus: -----

AGE PERIODS PAUPER ADMISSIONS 1898

TOTAL ADMISSIONS 977
EXCLUSIVE OF 28 CHILDREN
OF PAUPER MOTHERS.

